

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 08796 241333Z
ACTION SNM-05

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2105

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BANGKOK 8796

STADIS////////////////////////////////

FOR S/NM FALCO FROM AMBASSADOR

EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: SNAR TH
SUBJECT: CUSTOMS ADVISORY TEAM

1. AS YOU KNOW, OUR CUSTOMS ADVISORY TEAM IS NOW IN THE
PROCESS OF A SIGNIFICANT PERSONNEL TURNOVER. THE SECOND
OFFICER IN THE TEAM WILL BE LEAVING WITHIN THE NEXT TWO
MONTHS, WITH NO WORD AS YET ON WHEN HIS REPLACEMENT WILL
ARRIVE. FURTHER, THE TEAM LEADER, AL BISHOP, IS NOW
SCHEDULED OUT IN SEPTEMBER.

2. GIVEN OUR PAST PROBLEMS IN TERMS OF PERSONNEL RELATIONSHIPS
BETWEEN OUR ADVISORY TEAM AND THE SENIOR RTC OFFICERS,
I AM CONCERNED THAT THE PRESENT REPLACEMENT SCHEDULE MAY NOT
PROVIDE SUFFICIENT TIME FOR BISHOP TO TRAIN THE NEW SECOND
MAN AND TO GET HIS OWN REPLACEMENT ACCUSTOMED TO DEALING WITH THE
RTC IN A MANNER WHICH WILL AVOID THE MAJOR PROBLEMS WE HAVE
HAD IN THE PAST.

3. I UNDERSTAND THAT CUSTOMS WOULD BE RELUCTANT TO LEAVE
BISHOP HERE LONGER THAN SEPTEMBER WHEN HE WILL LOSE
HIS TEMPORARY CIVIL SERVICE RANK AND SUFFER A REDUCTION
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IN PAY. (BISHOP IS WILLING TO REMAIN EVEN WITH THE HIAY
REDUCTION.)

4. I BELIEVE IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT A1 HAVE ENOUGH TIME
TO BREAK IN BOTH THE NEW OPERATIONS MAN COMING OUT IN
THE SUMMER AND HIS OWN EVENTUAL REPLACEMENT.

5. CONSEQUENTLY I WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF YOU COULD
TAKE UP DIRECTLY WITH CUSTOMS THE POSSIBILITY OF
BISHOP STAYING UNTIL JANUARY 1979. WE WOULD HOPE THAT
HIS REPLACEMENT COULD COME OUT IN NOVEMBER, FOR A TWO
MONTH OVERLAP.

6. IF IT IS HELPFUL, YOU CAN ASSURE CUSTOMS THAT WE
HAVE NO INTENTION OF REQUESTING BISHIP'S SERVICES HERE
BEYOND JANUARY 1979 BUT DO BELIEVE THAT HIS PRESENCE
WILL MAKE FOR A MUCH EASIER TRANSITION FOR BOTH THE THAI
CUSTOMS PEOPLE AND OUR OWN CUSTOMS ADVISORY GROUP.

7. I VERY MUCH APPRECIATE WHATEVER YOU CAN DO.
WHITEHOUSE

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